

Area Administrators/Program Directors

11/5-6/2008

Lincoln State Office Building
301 Centennial Mall South
6th Floor, VR Conference Room
Lincoln, Nebraska

Wednesday, November 5, 2008 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Thursday, November 6, 2008 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

1. HR Information

Joel Scherling, Amy Spellman

I-9 forms are audited by the State Auditors and in looking at the I-9's on employees HR discovered some inconsistencies in how our field staff have been filling these forms out. These forms must be filled out on the employee's first day of work, identifying the proper documents by name of document, issuing authority and expiration date. If the employee provides something from List A then nothing is required from List B or List C and by collecting and writing down something in List B and List C columns this is considered "document abuse" and if the employee provides something from all three lists you must ask the employee which one they wish to use.

If the employer review has to correct something that was filled in, whiteout cannot be used, draw a straight line through the incorrect information and date and initial the strikeout and correct. Date completed and signed by the employee must be the same date for all the places the signed by the employee. The employer review must be completed and dated within three days of the employee start date. Dates cannot be corrected if they are incorrect, they will just be out of compliance. Some things that can be fixed which are shown on the examples Amy distributed.

Amy will also be available to do training over the phone with any staff in the field that are responsible for working with these forms if the AA's would like.

EAP – employees can visit with an EAP counselor once during each contract year.

2. Community Supports Waiver Program

Pam Hovis

The Community Supports Waiver program is a set of community based services and supports funded through Developmental Disabilities System. The waiver amount is \$20,000 or the limit for their DD funding whichever is less per year. These amounts do not include costs for modifications; there is an allowance of up to \$5,000 for these services. These clients can go with the waiver one year and then go back to DD funding the next year; they can also switch funding during the year. The pilot project was in the Central Area and Judy reports that they haven't participated in the funding of any of these consumers who have chosen the waiver as the type of work the client wanted was more leisure activity not work. Or the other extreme when the client finds a provider and the amount they can pay the provider (\$6.50-\$10.00) and then the provider comes to VR to supplement the amount the client was going to pay them, these cases the Central area did not pick up.

Jack (lead), Pat, Judy, Melanee will be on a committee to develop some recommendations for guidance and will present at the next AA/Program meeting.

7. Data Center Update

Dan

Laptops: TR laptops – supporting 119 laptop computers, the majority of these are shared office checkout laptops. They are older and don't support the eval suite software. 3 TR staff has elected to replace their desktop computers with laptops. Had hoped that through the ESU IT Committee to have school policies to allow VR staff to have access to the Internet, but it is a school-by-school decision. The larger schools are more likely to allow VR staff to bring their laptops and log into their Internet while the smaller schools are more reluctant to allow access. Our staff needs to find the IT person at the school to make arrangements to log into their Internet.

Broadband wireless Internet costs \$130 per month per card through the state so that's not an option.

Email migration to the Enterprise system is coming.

8. State Car Usage and Travel Policy

Cinda and Cathy

Distributed the chart that shows the state car usage, only one car is up for replacement and the mileage on that car is lower than the 1000 miles per month so a justification will be required in order to get it replaced.

The interim deputy commissioner approved travel Policy today.

9. Purchasing hearing aids

Pat

When the revised Rule 72 went into effect in July with cost sharing eliminated the concern was raised about the clients who are working coming to VR wanting us to pay for hearing aids. Some of these clients could assist in purchasing the hearing aids but may tell us that they can't afford it. Should we be paying for these aids? It's a judgment call.

10. Closing SE Cases

Pat

During the case reviews it was discovered that often when we are closing SE cases we don't have contact with the consumer, instead we contacted the provider. However we train new staff that establishing the relationship with the client, empowering the client, and informed choice are critical elements then we should not only contact the service provider as well as the consumer. This has been our policy however; the case reviews indicate that we aren't doing it. The AA's will make sure that this is reinforced in each of the team meetings.

11. EW Monitoring for SE Cases

Pat

We discovered the mental health providers aren't doing as many follow up contacts. Part of the issue is that the MH philosophy is that the mental health clients determine when they don't need follow up any longer, the provider doesn't decide, the client does.

At this time we decided that we would continue to have Easter Seals monitor the SE cases. Addressed some of the issues that have come up with Easter Seals doing monitoring, clarified some of the procedures.

12. Year in Year Goal

Pat

Decided not to change anything. At next AA Program meeting Cheryl will report on progress of teams towards standard 1.1 (Pat's year in year goal sheet).

13. VRIS directory

Not going to change it (Larry's issue).

14. Employee Service Recognition

Employee recognition by the state at the capital for Lincoln staff, the rest of the teams should recognize staff locally.

15. Self employment

Don

Business support person – helping clients set up web sites, Better Business workshops, helping them keep books, 9 so far. Several self-employment businesses doing very well right now.

190 referrals since July 06, 14 referrals to workshop this quarter, which is an increase.

16. Reauthorization Discussion with Connie Garner of Senator Ted Kennedy's office

Frank

Carl Suter from CSAVR invited about 10 State Directors to meet with Connie last week. Spent most of the time talking about Transition services. She will be the main person responsible for reauthorization of the Rehab Act. If something would happen that Senator Kennedy wouldn't be able to continue serving Connie would probably become the next Assistant Secretary for OSERS.

17. Closing Workforce Centers

Frank

Received notice that the following four Workforce Centers will be closing: Chadron, Falls City, Holdrege, Kearney. Dept of Labor has been very closed about these closures. They are being closed because of lack of productivity by November 6.

18. TACE Centers

Mark, Margy

RCEP is no longer; they are now technical assistance and continuing education (TACE). Dave Roberts will be the head of TACE. The TACE centers are in partnerships with RSA. Three major areas, needs assessment, state plan, monitoring.

Diana Beckley, working with counseling and benefits

Dave will do process and needs assessment. It's possible Dave will be able to assist with our needs assessment that we need to do for the state plan.

The will be offering medical aspects training via on-line courses. Also one on Orientation to VR, Medical Information, Cognitive disabilities, spinal cord and ethics. Cost \$50 to \$100 per user.

Peer Support network – continuing the field administrator and state director meetings and maybe adding one fiscal meeting each year.

By Dec 16 wants to hear from us on our local and statewide needs, as they will be going to DC to meet with RSA staff to determine next steps. Management training – ideas for TACE, funding for medical aspects trainers, other TACE center on-line training availability, needs assessment, 4 state shared employer database, guidance on post secondary and when it's appropriate, how to determine if the student/client can benefit and be successful, how to steer them in another direction when school not appropriate.

19. Field Administrators meeting

Don

They are held twice a year in June and December. Three staff will attend each time, Don being one of the staff each time. The expectation is that the program directors and Area Administrators will be on a

rotation to attend the meetings. Judy Vohland, Kim Simmons and Sharon Koeppe will be attending in December. Judy is in charge of developing the agenda. People from each state send in agenda items as well as Dave Roberts.

Talked about what topics to put on the Field Administrator meeting as well as State Directors meeting in December. Hopefully we will have this meeting before the next Field Administrator meeting to suggest agenda items.

20. QUEST reports

Sarah

Reviewed some of the quest reports available. Looked at the referral sources report that is being developed for Omaha and how other teams could use it.

Referrals by county, outcomes by county. Send your copies of your handwritten reports to Cheryl.

21. Omaha PWI

Arvin

Goodwill Industries in Omaha received a PWI grant. They have hired a director, Ginny Powell (from our Omaha West office). Omaha Goodwill will have a board of directors. Concerned that when applying for the grant they were in contact with VR and Arvin and now since received it have heard nothing.

22. EEOC

Gordon

Had an applicant for a staff position who in the space of 4 years applied for a job several times. First interview over the phone when living out of state. We don't have to continue to interview someone if they apply multiple times.

Six applicants who met the minimum standard, then screened as bi-lingual. The original person was in the first six pool but not bi-lingual and she filed suit alleging age discrimination and more experience. This case was dismissed because the applicant hired was bi-lingual and the EEOC will always look at the ability to serve minorities. However, Gordon said if that applicant had filed suit on the previous hire he probably would not have had the same results

23. Transition laptops

Jack

Sent a e-mail to OD's/AA's whether staff need training on the laptops and realized that he should have been more specific in the questions and he will be resending this query again. Because in talking with Laura and Janet it became apparent that what some of the staff might need will be easily taken care of.

24. Case Review information

(1) Not showing up for appointments or cancelling for not very good reasons, (2) previously unsuccessful closures who have come back again, (3) not seeing thorough planning and development in developing the plan, not looking at work considerations, job readiness factors either not identified or identified but not taken into consideration.

25. Strengths Finders

Margy

When new members of the team are hired are we having them do the Strengths Finders. Melanee gives the new employee the Strengths Finder book and

Cheryl will ask the OD/AA when setting up their training schedule if they want the new staff to take the Strengths finder? And if so send them a book with the new employee notebook.

26. Poverty Training from State Staff

Frank

Committee developed: King, chair, Leta Simms, Don Crouch, Mark Schultz, Judy Vohland, Shari Redler

Committee to look at ways we would use the poverty consultant with Jodi Pfarr to look at our process to see how she might be of assistance to us. Report back at the next AA/PD meeting. Maybe this is something that Dave Roberts might be able to fund as it would fit into our organization planning